

ELECTION 1972



SPECIAL REPORT



What rough beast slouches to Ottawa?

Things fall apart, the centre cannot hold
Here Stanfield is loosed upon the world

Picking his way through the broken sprockets and flywheels of the Liberal machine, Energy Minister Donald Macdonald, a man likely to be assigned to try to put all together again, proclaimed the dreaded "backlash." It was "... a Tory redneck attack on Quebec," said Mr. Macdonald. "It was an attack on the Government's bilingualism policy, even though it didn't concern most of Ontario."

Macdonald, the dispenser of favours and collector of votes for the federal Liberals in Ontario, had just spent a humiliating evening in his Toronto Rosedale constituency fighting off somebody named Beamish. He armed to his subject: "Immigration was also an issue. They [the voters] were against immigration, French Canada and better social justice ... that seems to be the mood in Ontario and it's a pretty ugly mood."

Similar thoughts sprang from the lips of other Liberals. Gerard Pelletier, for example, nut the Liberal defeat down to greed — the rich provinces got tired of sending money to the poor ones. Thus we are to believe that the election was a classic confrontation between niceness and charity, and nastiness and greed. The bad guys won. It is a neat theory, and it partly explains what happened. Robert Stanfield, cast in the mould of earnest incompetence, did provide shade for the weirdest assortment of people — from the Nazi-minded Kupiak running in Toronto's Lakeshore (he proclaimed that his victory would embarrass Brezhnev more than both Bobby Fischer and Team Canada — fortunately we were all spared) to the blimpish Lt.-Col. (Ret.) Strome Galloway (big discipline up there in Ottawa-Carleton).

It was not only the strange cast the Conservative party posed, but the lines it gave them to speak, including platitudes of the leader himself, that lend credence to Macdonald's charges.

The election in English Canada was fought by the Tories in a manner calculated to pander to latent racism. Gerry Reilly, the successful Conservative candidate in Ottawa West, sensed it early in the campaign. "There is a good deal of racism being given new life in this area," he said. "It masquerades as being concern for public servants." Reilly went on to say that racism "will not be tolerated in my campaign." He then campaigned against the federal government's policy of bilingualism; following passage appears in an article by Clair Ball in the *Toronto Globe and Mail*:

"But he [Reilly] repeated that merit should be the criterion for success in a public service career, regardless of language."

"He added the problem is so serious that the only solution may be to slow the program to be fair to public servants."

"That form of fairness to the English-speaking means being unfair to French-speaking Canadians, he was minded. He shot back: 'I've never believed you rectify injustice by perpetrating a second one.'"

This supplement was prepared by Nick Auf der Horst, Ken Bolton, Drummond Burgess, Robert Giddens, Nick Fillmore, Dennis Forkin, Sharon Galloway, Dennis Gruending, Eric Hamovitch, Richard Liskeard, Brian McKenna, Terry Mosher, and Murphy, Malcolm Reid.



Berthio, Le Devoir

Bilingualism and biculturalism and the federalism represented by Trudeau were inventions of English Canada to stifle separatism in Quebec without dealing with the issue. What happens now, when even the empty gesture is withdrawn?

Trudeau's broken dream

Prime Minister Trudeau didn't fare too well at a Chicoutimi rally only three days before the election. A bunch of hostile students greeted him with the slogan "Le Québec aux Québécois" to which he replied "Le Canada aux Québécois," thus confirming the fears of those who were concerned that the prime minister was engaging in "outright French Canadianism," to borrow a phrase from Douglas Alkenbrack, Tory MP for the eastern-Ontario riding of Frontenac-Lennox and Addington — heavy Loyalist sentiment there.

Whether Trudeau knew it or not, part of his 1968 mandate came from English Canadians who were fed up with the antics of disgruntled Québécois and felt that at last here was a man to put them in their place. After all, he was pretty tough on separatism, and he could be tough with the separatists in their own language, no mean feat. Besides, what harm could a few Frenchmen do in Ottawa?

Trudeau has been tough on separatism — he delivered a double whammy to some 497 law-abiding opponents of the regime in October 1970. He has also engaged in the tactic of sweet reason. (His reason may not have been sound, but it was sweet.) By allowing French-speaking Canadians to communicate with and work in the federal civil service in his father-tongue (his mother is English-speaking), what Trudeau regarded as the frustration which gave rise to Quebec nationalism could largely be siphoned off, or so he reasoned.

Trudeau seems to have lost on two counts in his efforts to bilingualize the civil service. On the one hand, he misinterpreted the recommendations of the B&B Commission to read that all civil servants should be bilingual: by jeopardizing the advancement of those who could not speak French and by thrusting language courses upon thousands of unwilling subjects, he alienated a substantial

number of Ottawa's deeply-ingrained English-speaking civil servants (the Liberals lost two Ottawa-area seats to the Tories).

On the other hand, his policy has failed to produce substantial positive results. A report leaked to the nationalist Montreal daily *Le Devoir* (and picked up by the *Toronto Star* — strange ally — and other English-language papers across the country) shows that the proportion of French-speaking people holding high posts in the federal civil service has not increased appreciably since Trudeau came into power.

The report says that 71 per cent of those hired to fill such posts are unilingual English Canadians, that only 5.2 per cent of civil servants in Ottawa are in French-language units (1.1 per cent if you exclude language services such as the overburdened translation bureau), that only 8.1 per cent of those who take language courses follow them far enough to obtain proficiency in French (it costs \$29,000 to make an English-speaking civil servant bilingual), and that there are no French-language units in the prime minister's own department.

The federal civil service recruitment office in Quebec City, which has by far the largest number of qualified and experienced French-speaking civil servants of any Canadian city, was closed as part of Trudeau's 1969 austerity drive. The 1975 target date for full bilingualism in the civil service cannot possibly be met.

Yet there prevails among English Canadians the sentiment that somehow Trudeau is turning Canada into a French country in which English-speaking citizens are gradually losing their rights, and that the Quebec ministers in the federal government are sub-Canadians.

Late in the campaign Robert Stanfield admonished two of his candidates for using advertisements that had racist overtones. An ad for a Tory candidate in Thunder Bay read, "John Erickson knows that we need a Canadian

Continued to page 16



Cartoons by Aislin, The Gazette